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SUBJECT: DPRK: GOR LOOKING FOR SANCTIONS BALANCED WITH
INCENTIVES

REF: USUN 536

Classified By: Political Minister Counselor Alice G. Wells for reasons
1.4 (B) and (D)

¶1. (SBU) Russian MFA Spokesperson Andrey Nesterenko's May 28 statement that "we do not need a language of sanctions" has received wide coverage and called into question Moscow's support for sending North Korea a strong message through a new UNSC resolution. The statement, however, should be viewed in the full context of the press briefing and the GOR's consistently stated emphasis on the primacy of the Six-Party Talks in resolving the DPRK nuclear problem. In yesterday's briefing, Nesterenko reiterated the MFA's and Presidential Administration's May 25 statements that there was no doubt North Korea had violated UNSCR 1718 and that Russia had no basis to oppose a new resolution, as Moscow would not tolerate challenges in any form to the authority of the UN Security Council and the NPT. At the same time, he stressed that the GOR viewed the Six-Party Talks as the only viable means to resolve the North Korean nuclear issue and in that regard considered it counterproductive to create an atmosphere of a "de-facto full international isolation" of the DPRK. "The door of dialogue with Pyongyang should not be closed under any circumstances," he stated. Ambassador-at-Large for the Six-Party Talks Grigoriy Logvinov has expressed similar sentiments to us on several occasions.

¶2. (C) Given the GOR's dual interest in upholding Security Council authority and maintaining the viability of the Six-Party Talks, we believe Moscow will likely agree to a UNSC resolution containing strong sanctions language, provided it is balanced with carrots for North Korea's return to the Talks. We understand from our British colleagues that during a May 27 meeting with British Ambassador to Russia Anne Pringle, Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksey Borodavkin indicated that Moscow was in favor of a Chapter 7 resolution and supported some of the draft elements the U.S. had circulated (reftel). Without elaborating on the elements on which the GOR had reservations, he said that the GOR would need additional time to vet internally some of the proposed sanctions, especially the financial ones. The key for Russia, Borodavkin reportedly stated, was that the sanctions would be "timed" to allow reward for positive DPRK behavior, and that the resolution would include "confidence building measures" to provide Pyongyang incentives to return to the negotiating table. However, the MFA was still internally discussing the nature of these measures. Deputy Foreign Minister Ryabkov separately told us that he considered resolving the North Korea issue a priority in the U.S.-Russia bilateral dialogue and in that regard was confident we would find a joint, balanced approach to address the newest challenges presented by Pyongyang's nuclear and missile testings.

13. (C) Russia's negotiating strategy in the Security Council will likely depend on the Chinese position as well. After meeting with the Chinese ambassador on May 25, Borodavkin stated that Moscow and Beijing were on the same page with regard to North Korea. As it had done during Security Council discussions following Pyongyang's April 5 missile test, Russia is likely to let China take the lead in providing Pyongyang with a certain degree of protection against overly stringent sanctions. In this regard, Ryabkov remarked to us that Beijing was unlikely to push Pyongyang hard enough to change fundamentally the North Korean leadership's calculus for brinkmanship.

BEYRLE